

PATENT

Personal Organizational Accessory

This is a non-provisional application based on provisional application Serial No. 60/429,388, filed November 27, 2002, for which priority is claimed.

Summary Of The Invention

One aspect of the present invention is a personal organizational accessory

5 comprising a sliding panel and a main body. The sliding panel has a first edge, a second edge, a front face, an access device, an insertion portion and a supporting portion. The insertion portion extends longitudinally from the first edge in a direction of the second edge. The supporting portion extends longitudinally from the insertion portion to the second edge. The insertion portion includes a ramp device and a

10 stopping device. The stopping device has a stopping device width. The stopping device width is measured from a longitudinal axis of the sliding panel. The access device is located on the supporting portion at a panel distance from the first edge. The

access device is adapted to provide a grip for a user to move the sliding panel. The sliding panel is adapted to support an electronic device having a working face. The main body has a slot and a protecting portion. The protecting portion extends longitudinally from the slot to an end edge. The end edge is located at a protecting distance from the slot. The protecting distance is less than the panel distance. The protecting portion is adapted to longitudinally receive the sliding panel such that when the first edge of the sliding panel abuts the end edge of the protecting portion the access device is opposite the slot from the end edge. The slot has a slot width and is changeable from a non-stretched condition to a stretched condition. The slot width is less than the stopping device width when in the non-stretched condition. The slot is adapted to interact with the sliding panel such that, as the insertion portion is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion, the ramp device of the insertion portion stretches the slot from the non-stretched position to the stretched position such that the stopping device may be inserted into the protecting portion. The slot is further adapted to interact with the sliding panel such that, when the stopping device passes the slot as the sliding panel is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion, the slot returns to a non-stretched position. The slot is further adapted to interact with the sliding panel such that when the stopping device is in the protecting portion the slot will abut the stopping device as the sliding panel is moved longitudinally to retain the insertion portion of the sliding panel in the protecting portion of the main body.

Another aspect of the present invention is a sliding panel for use with a personal organizational accessory. The person organizational accessory has a main body having a slot, a protecting portion, and at least one retaining portion. The retaining

portion is adapted to retain an article. The article is adapted to store information input by a user. The protecting portion extends longitudinally from the slot to an end edge. The end edge is located at a protecting distance from the slot. The protecting portion is adapted to longitudinally receive a sliding panel. The slot has a slot width and is

5 changeable from a non-stretched condition to a stretched condition. The slot width is less in the non-stretched condition than in the stretched condition. The sliding panel comprises a first edge, a second edge, a front face, an access device, an insertion portion and a supporting portion. The insertion portion extends longitudinally from the first edge in a direction of the second edge. The supporting portion extends

10 longitudinally from the insertion portion to the second edge. The insertion portion includes a ramp device and a stopping device. The stopping device has a stopping device width measured from a longitudinal axis of the sliding panel. The access device is located on the supporting portion at a panel distance from the first edge and is adapted to provide a grip for a user to move the sliding panel from a closed position to

15 an open position. The sliding panel is adapted to support an electronic device having a working face. The sliding panel is further adapted to interact with the main body such that as the insertion portion is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion of the main body the ramp device of the insertion portion stretches the slot from the non-stretched position to the stretched position such that the stopping device may be

20 inserted into the retaining portion. The sliding panel is further adapted to interact with the main body such that when the stopping device passes the slot as the sliding panel is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion the slot returns to a non-stretched position. The sliding panel is further adapted to interact with the main body such that

when the stopping device is in the protecting portion the slot will abut the stopping device as the sliding panel is moved longitudinally to retain the insertion portion of the sliding panel in the protecting portion of the main body.

Another aspect of the present invention is a method of using a sliding panel. The sliding panel comprises a first edge, a second edge, a front face, an access device, an insertion portion and a supporting portion. The insertion portion extends longitudinally from the first edge in a direction of the second edge. The supporting portion extends longitudinally from the insertion portion to the second edge. The insertion portion includes a ramp device and a stopping device. The stopping device has a stopping device width measured from a longitudinal axis of the sliding panel. The access device is located on the supporting portion at a panel distance from the first edge and is adapted to provide a grip for a user to move the sliding panel from a closed position to an open position. The sliding panel is adapted to support an electronic device having a working face. The sliding panel is further adapted to interact with the main body such that as the insertion portion is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion of the main body the ramp device of the insertion portion stretches the slot from the non-stretched position to the stretched position such that the stopping device may be inserted into the protecting portion. The sliding panel is further adapted to interact with the main body such that when the stopping device passes the slot as the sliding panel is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion the slot returns to a non-stretched position. The sliding panel is further adapted to interact with the main body such that when the stopping device is in the protecting portion the slot will abut the stopping device as the sliding panel is moved longitudinally to retain the insertion portion of the

sliding panel in the protecting portion of the main body. The method comprising the steps of providing a personal organizational accessory. The personal organizational accessory has a main body having a slot, a protecting portion, and at least one retaining portion, the retaining portion being adapted to retain an article, the article being adapted to store information input by a user, the protecting portion extending longitudinally from the slot to an end edge, the end edge being located at a protecting distance from the slot, the protecting portion being adapted to longitudinally receive a sliding panel, the slot having a slot width and being changeable from a non-stretched condition to a stretched condition, the slot width being less in the non-stretched condition than in the stretched condition. The method further comprising inserting the sliding panel into the slot of the main body until the stopping device is past the slot.

Other features and advantages will be in part apparent and in part pointed out hereinafter.

Brief Description Of The Drawings

Fig. 1 is a front plan view of a personal organizational accessory according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a rear plan view of the personal organizational accessory of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a front plan view of the sliding panel of the personal organizational accessory of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 4 is a cutaway view of a portion of the main body of the personal organizational accessory of Fig. 1.

Corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

Detailed Description Of The Preferred Embodiments

Referring now to the drawings, and more particularly to Fig. 1, a personal organizational accessory is shown generally at 20. The personal organizational accessory in this embodiment is a checkbook, however the personal organizational accessory may be any suitable device including but not limited to a planner, an organizer, a wallet, or a clutch. The personal organizational accessory 20 includes a main body 22 and a sliding panel 24. The sliding panel 24 is adapted to support an electronic device. The electronic device is a calculator in the embodiment shown, however the electronic device may be any suitable device. The sliding panel 24 supports the electronic device such that a working face of the electronic device is accessible to a user. In Fig. 1, the sliding panel 24 and the electronic device are integrally formed, however the sliding panel may include a recess adapted to hold the electronic device.

Referring now to Fig. 3, the sliding panel is shown generally at 24 (the electronic device is not shown in this figure for reasons of clarity). The sliding panel has a first edge 26, a second edge 28, a front face 30, an access device 32, an insertion portion 34 and a supporting portion 36. The insertion portion extends longitudinally from the first edge in a direction of the second edge. The supporting portion extends longitudinally from the insertion portion to the second edge. The insertion portion includes a ramp device 38 and a stopping device 40. The stopping device 40 has a stopping device width 42. The stopping device width is measured from a longitudinal axis 44 of the sliding panel 24. The access device 32 is located on the supporting

portion 36 at a panel distance 46 from the first edge 26. The access device 32 is adapted to provide a grip for a user to move the sliding panel 24.

Referring now to Fig. 4, the main body is shown generally at 22. The main body 22 has a slot 50 and a protecting portion 52. The protecting portion 52 extends
5 longitudinally from the slot 50 to an end edge 54. The end edge 54 is located at a protecting distance 56 from the slot 50. The protecting distance 56 is less than the panel distance 46. The protecting portion 52 is adapted to longitudinally receive the sliding panel 24 such that when the first edge 26 of the sliding panel abuts the end edge
54 of the protecting portion 52 the access device 32 is opposite the slot 50 from the end
10 edge 54. The slot 50 has a slot width 58 and is changeable from a non-stretched condition to a stretched condition. The slot width is less than the stopping device width 42 when in the non-stretched condition.

The protecting portion 52 is a pocket formed under a cover 60 of the main body 22. Access to the protecting portion 52 is through slot 50 in the cover 60. In the
15 embodiment shown, the cover 60 is leather. The cover 60 may be any suitable synthetic or natural material provided that the slot 50 is changeable from one of the non-stretched condition and the stretched condition to the other. The slot width 58 is less than the stopping device width 42 when in the non-stretched condition. The slot 50 is adapted to interact with the sliding panel 24 such that, as the insertion portion 34 is
20 inserted longitudinally through the slot 50 into the protecting portion 52, the ramp device 38 of the insertion portion 34 stretches the slot 50 from the non-stretched position to the stretched position such that the stopping device 40 may be inserted into the protecting portion 52. The slot 50 is further adapted to interact with the sliding panel 24 such that,

when the stopping device 40 passes the slot 50 as the sliding panel 24 is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion 52, the slot 50 will return to a non-stretched position. The slot 50 is further adapted to interact with the sliding panel 24 such that when the stopping device 40 is in the protecting portion 52 the slot 50 will abut the
5 stopping device 40 as the sliding panel 24 is moved longitudinally to retain the insertion portion 34 of the sliding panel 24 in the protecting portion 52 of the main body 22.

The access device 32 is located on the supporting portion 36 at a panel distance 46 from the first edge 26 and is adapted to provide a grip for a user to move the sliding panel 24 from a closed position shown in Fig. 2 to an open position shown in Fig. 1.

10 The sliding panel 24 is adapted to support an electronic device 26 having a working face. The sliding panel 24 is further adapted to interact with the main body 22 such that as the insertion portion 34 is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion 52 of the main body 22 the ramp device 38 of the insertion portion 34 stretches the slot 50 from the non-stretched position to the stretched position such that the stopping device 40
15 may be inserted into the protecting portion 52. The sliding panel 24 is further adapted to interact with the main body 22 such that when the stopping device 40 passes the slot 50 as the sliding panel 24 is inserted longitudinally into the protecting portion 52 the slot 50 returns to a non-stretched position. The sliding panel 24 is further adapted to interact with the main body 22 such that when the stopping device 40 is in the protecting
20 portion 52 the slot will abut the stopping device 40 as the sliding panel 24 is moved longitudinally to retain the insertion portion 34 of the sliding panel 24 in the protecting portion 52 of the main body 22. In the closed position at least a portion of the working face of the electronic device is contained in the protecting portion 52.

In use, a personal organizational accessory 20 and a sliding panel 24 are provided. The insertion portion 34 of the sliding panel 24 is inserted into the slot 50.

The ramp device 38 comes into contact with the slot 50 causing the slot to stretch. The sliding panel 24 continues inside the protecting portion 52 until the stopping device 40

5 passes the slot 50. The slot 50 then returns to a non-stretched condition in which the stopping device width 42 is less than the slot width 58. The insertion portion 34 of the sliding panel 24 is then retained in the protecting portion 52. The sliding panel 24 may be moved between the closed position and the open position. In the closed position

shown in Fig. 2 the access device 32 is located outside the slot and allows a user to

10 grasp the sliding panel 24 for movement to an open position. In the open position

shown in Fig. 1 the electronic device is accessible to a user. The main body 22

includes at least one retaining portion 62 that is adapted to receive an article. The

article is adapted to store information input by a user when the sliding panel is in the

open position. The article may be any suitable register including but not limited to a

15 check register, a notepad, or an electronic device. The personal organizational

accessory 20 is adapted to retain an article in an orientation that allows a user to access

both the article and the sliding panel when in the open position.

In the embodiment shown in the figures, the slot 50 is located in the cover 60 on a side opposite the retaining portion 62. However, it is to be understood that other

20 configurations may be employed without departing from this invention such as locating the slot 50 and the protecting portion 52 at another location of the main body 22.

As various changes could be made in the above constructions and methods without departing from the scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained

in the above description or shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense. Thus, the breadth and scope of the present invention should not be limited by any of the above-described exemplary embodiments, but should be defined only in accordance with the following claims appended hereto and
5 their equivalents.